



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

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Memorandum

TO: Commission

DATE: July 17, 2013

FR: Executive Director

W.I: 1229

RE: Update on BART Strike Response

Two of BART's unions went on strike, starting on July 1st. On July 4th, BART management and the unions agreed to extend the existing labor agreement for 30 days, thus suspending the strike, but not concluding the contract negotiation. This memorandum summarizes the region's response to the strike and describes preparations underway for a potential August strike.

Historically, MTC's role in emergency response has been to serve as a clearinghouse for service plans from our transportation partners. As such, beginning in May 2013 staff led the development of a BART strike regional contingency plan that identified supplemental services as provided by the region's transportation agencies. Staff convened daily conference calls with key transportation providers throughout the strike and updated the plan as the strike proceeded.

Coordinated Regional Response

During the strike, transit agencies increased their services, mostly within their existing jurisdiction and recorded significant spikes in ridership as shown in Attachment A. While serving only a fraction of overall demand, AC Transit increased transbay ridership by 150% and WETA by 200%. Some travelers took matters into their own hands: carpool formation increased significantly. The number of vehicles using the carpools lanes on the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Bridge increased by 30% or 12,000 vehicles (including midday carpools) as compared to the same week in July 2012. However, when adding up the additional transit riders and carpools and comparing to daily BART ridership (400,000 trips), it is clear that many travelers either were on vacation, worked from home or drove alone to their destinations.

The experience of motorists seemed varied: those who had a Transbay commute in the peak commute direction experienced the greatest delay. On the first day of the strike Caltrans reported that I-80 experienced 25 minutes of additional delay during 6am-8am. Given that the strike was during a holiday week where overall travel demand historically is lighter, delays could have been far worse.

Highlights of special services include.

- BART chartered private bus service from four stations that linked to West Oakland and then transported commuters to San Francisco. Demand far exceeded capacity.
- AC Transit operated its normal service; however they shifted articulated buses to the Transbay routes to increase overall capacity.
- The Water Emergency Transit Authority (WETA), with assistance from Golden Gate Transit, added one additional ferry, increased the frequency of trips and provided ambassadors to direct commuters to the ferry terminal.
- Caltrans extended the hours of operation for carpool lanes along I-80 between the Carquinez and San Francisco/Oakland Bay Bridges. They designated the West Grand Avenue on-ramp to the Bay Bridge for exclusive use by HOV (3+), trucks and bus access. CHP increased enforcement of the HOV lanes. The Freeway Service Patrol extended hours of operation.
- 511 served as the go-to resource for commute options for the duration of the strike. 511 staff developed a special web page at alert.511.org detailing supplemental service maps, casual carpool sites, and park & ride information. MTC staff worked 24 hours per day in three shifts throughout the strike. The rideshare program distributed commuter information to employers and operated extended customer service hours. As shown in Attachment A, 511 experienced considerable spikes in usage.

Funding

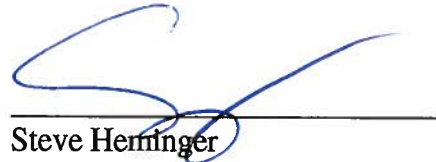
At its June meeting, the Commission approved reimbursement of special services provided by transit agencies, Caltrans, and CHP from the balance of BART's FY 2013-14 STA revenue-based funds, uncommitted FY 2013-14 RM2 operating funds, and the Disaster Preparedness funds line item in the FY 2013-14 MTC budget, respectively. At this time, staff does not believe that additional funding is required. Staff estimates that approximately \$35,000 has been spent by CHP (officer overtime) and Caltrans (new HOV signs and portable changeable message signs). Staff will have an estimate of transit costs incurred to date for the July Commission meeting.

Preparations for Potential August Strike

Staff is preparing for the possibility of an additional strike when the contract extension expires. The media has reported that both parties remain far apart in their negotiations. A second strike could occur as early as Monday, August 5 at 12:01 AM.

Overall, staff believes that supplemental transit service delivery next month will look fairly similar to the July response. BART has proposed to slightly adjust their limited shuttle routes. In addition to the service from the four outlying stations, they will provide direct service to San Francisco. Staff has not yet confirmed what other transportation partners plan to do, but expects that it will be similar to what was provided in the July 1st strike. Staff will work with transit agencies to determine whether any service adjustments might improve overall efficiency.

Going forward, staff is considering if and how MTC should assume a more active role, including actively shaping service design with existing transit agencies and implementing additional services through private charter buses. Under our transit coordination responsibilities defined in State law, staff believes MTC has the authority to assume such an expanded role. While it is less clear what MTC's role should be during transit work stoppages – in contrast to natural disaster – staff will research and recommend to the Commission what additional measures could be at the ready for future regional emergencies.



Steve Heminger

Attachment A

Figure 1. Transit Operator Ridership Statistics

Existing Service		Shuttle Service	Increase in Operator Ridership (July 1 st)			
Service Coverage	BART 1-way Avg. Daily	BART Shuttle	Ferry Service	Bus Service	Rail Service	Total
Transbay	200,000	3,000	12,000	16,000	-	28,000
West Bay	110,000	-	-	55,000	5,000	55,000
East Bay	90,000	-	-	N/A-	-	N/A
System Wide	400,000	-	-	-	-	83,000

Figure 2. 511 Usage Highlights

511 Usage	Typical	July 1 st	% Change
511 Homepage (user sessions)	16,700	203,000	1,114%
511 Traffic (user sessions)	15,800	80,800	413%
511 Transit (user sessions)	43,900	93,900	114%
511 Phone (total calls)	20,000	38,500	93%
511 Strike Alert Page (page views)*	11,100	113,900	922%
Twitter Followers		16,100	N/A

*Compared to peak day page views of the 2009 511 BART strike page.